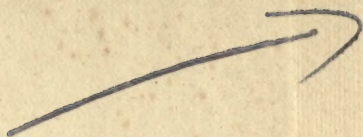


THE HUNDRED WINDOWS
BY H. D. LOWRY

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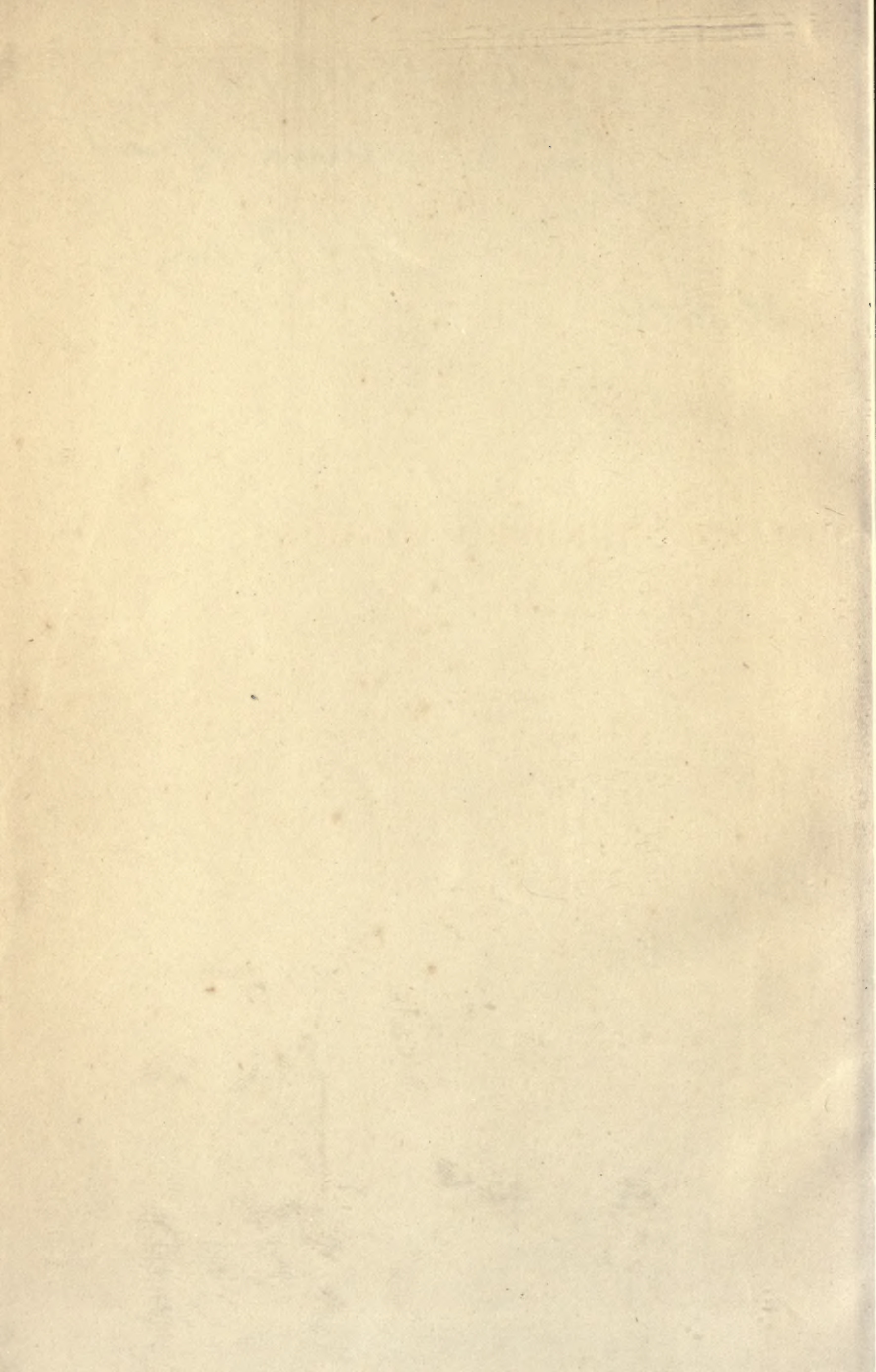


To Eden Phillips

from his colleague & friend

W. D. Long.

26. X. 02,
— 1



THE HUNDRED WINDOWS

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

WRECKERS AND METHODISTS.

WOMEN'S TRAGEDIES.

A MAN OF MOODS.

THE HAPPY EXILE.

MAKE-BELIEVE.

The Hundred Windows

BY

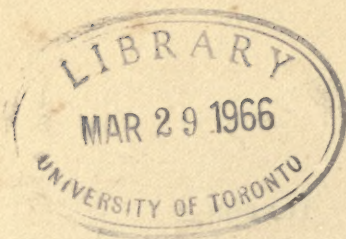
H. D. LOWRY

LONDON

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TO BEATRICE

*These to you, dear, that you may walk with me
Down the long Street of Memories, and gaze,
As through the Hundred Windows, till you know
What like they were, the years before you came,
When the dear truth—O, Heart o' mine, the truth
For which God planned a world—was hidden yet.*

*I have been glad, as sometimes, in a dream
The pauper counts his gold. I have known fear,
Whom naught could hurt with only self to guard.
Sunlight was lovely when it could not show
What now is always mine, come good or ill,
Meeting or parting. Often I have wept,
As children weep who crave the mirrored moon.*

*Now, in the starlit Street of Memories
Have pity on the man who long ago—
Dead Yesterday is dead as Babylon—
Waited, a dreamer, with no dream to dream.*

NOTE

MOST of the verses here brought together have appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Others are reprinted from the *Morning Post*, *Black and White*, the *Pall Mall Magazine*, and the *Londoner*. Some of them have been set to music by MISS LIZA LEHMANN, MISS FLORENCE AYLWARD, MR. HUBERT S. RYAN, MR. CARL HAHN, MR. WILLIAM DICHMONT, and others.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Dedication	v.
Note	vi.
I. Stars shine softly down in the West	1
II. If green be for jealousy	2
III. I have a dream—that some day I shall go	3
IV. I went in a dream to-day	4
V. Stars again, and the sea's voice calling	5
VI. Let us forget the dismal world, and dawn	6
VII. I saw you in the morning	7
VIII. A blackbird's piping in the wood	8
IX. In Covent Garden-	9
X. The heart my love had broken	11
XI. Like twilight's footsteps in the grass	12
XII. Where bloomed the heather flames the gorse in gold	13
XIII. Brown girl, wild girl, here's a good-bye	14
XIV. I will not move my hand to where	15
XV. I watch you from across the room	16
XVI. Art in Life	17
XVII. Art and Life-	19
XVIII. The stars are shining so clearly, clearly-	22
XIX. There's never a wave upon Western beaches-	23
XX. The wind came whispering in the night-	24
XXI. The World's End-	25
XXII. Had I stripped field and garden for your sake	28
XXIII. Last night, last night, how far away	31
XXIV. Now that my love lies sleeping	32
XXV. If only a woman were kind again	33
XXVI. I wonder what would please you best	34
XXVII. Wind, with your whisperings, leave me-	35
XXVIII. The moon rose slowly over the land	36
XXIX. So we have come to the parting of the ways	37
XXX. The Hundred Windows	38
XXXI. Every kiss I had of you	42

	PAGE
XXXII. The sullen dawn in the East comes creeping -	43
XXXIII. At Meeting - - - - -	44
XXXIV. Rosa Rosarum - - - - -	45
XXXV. By day I would forget you, if I might -	46
XXXVI. The Return - - - - -	49
XXXVII. The Spring calls - - - - -	52
XXXVIII. Cornish Carol - - - - -	54
XXXIX. Once, when my home was by the sea -	56
XL. 'Tis good to watch the yellow lights -	57
XLI. When I was but a little lad - - -	58
XLII. I look over the moorland - - - -	59
XLIII. When the sea calls, that lieth leagues away -	60
XLIV. The old sea here at my door - - -	61
XLV. Now what avail the barren hopes of Spring -	62
XLVI. Sing hey for the wind in the barley green -	63
XLVII. Death and a Town - - - - -	64
XLVIII. Peace - - - - -	66
XLIX. Epilogue - - - - -	68
L. Two Gardens - - - - -	69
LI. Coon Song - - - - -	74
LII. Mother Sleep - - - - -	76
LIII. When God grows tired of wintry days -	78
LIV. Pied Piper's Song - - - - -	80
LV. Song of the Burghers' Wives - - -	81
LVI. Lady Mary in your bower - - - -	83
LVII. Far had he wandered ere he found -	85
LVIII. I love my Mother more than words -	86
LIX. Telling Stories - - - - -	88
LX. The Earl of Dufferin and Ava - - -	89
LXI. G. W. Steevens - - - - -	91
LXII. Queen Victoria - - - - -	93
LXIII. "W. V." - - - - -	96
LXIV. L'Envoi - - - - -	97

I.

STARS shine softly down in the West
And your lost youth comes to find you,
With word of the girl that you loved the best
In the days you have left behind you.

Sleep comes easily there in the West
And the dawn is loth to wake you;
So you take your fill of the boon of rest,
Happy as dreams can make you.

II.

If green be for jealousy,
 Green's the robe for me.
If envy go in yellow,
 Yellow let it be.

For the red robe of love
 With my state doth not agree;
And if I should go in nakedness
 Shameful it would be.

III.

I HAVE a dream—that some day I shall go
At break of dawn adown a rainy street,
A grey old street, and I shall come in the end
To the little house I have known, and stand ; and
 you,
Mother of mine, who watch and wait for me,
Will you not hear my footstep in the street,
And, as of old, be ready at the door,
To give me rest again? . . . I shall come home.

IV.

I WENT in a dream to-day
To the wastelands by the sea,
I went by the old, old way ;
There was none who walked with me.

The heather was faded quite ;
On the gorse there was no more gold ;
At the cheerless thought of the night
The sea grew leaden and cold.

The seagulls circled and wailed,
Grey with the grey of the sky ;
And still, as the wan light failed,
Ship after ship went by.

V.

STARS again, and the sea's voice calling

(Hark once more !) in the heart of the night !

Under the stars, with the star-light falling,

Cometh a new delight.

Night shall give what the day denied us.

(Drink again of the breath of the sea !)

Sleep for guerdon shall lay beside us

All that we dreamed might be.

VI.

LET us forget the dismal world, and dawn—
Our enemy, that with the stars' retreat
Creeps on us through the rain with dragging feet
That stir the yellow leaves upon the lawn.

Let us forget! When the dear darkness dies
The haggard angel of the dawn will stand
Ev'n here, the sword of judgment in his hand,
To drive us from the ancient paradise.

VII.

I SAW you in the morning

When the lawn was wet with dew,
And none, the wide world over,
Was glad or fair as you.

I met you when the twilight

Melted from grey to blue. . . .
I've loved a hundred maidens,
But none could trust like you.

And now the night falls darkly,

And stars are faint and few.
There's someone sobbing—sobbing. . . .
Sweetheart, is it you ?

VIII.

A BLACKBIRD 's piping in the wood,

The gorse is all of gold ;

The first primroses of the year

Pale crumpled leaves unfold.

Ah, Sweetheart, while the Spring is here

Grant the last gift I crave.

To-day is ours, but long ago

Death chose and digged our grave.

IX.

IN COVENT-GARDEN

DAWN shows the Strand dishevelled and unkempt,
And horrible as, after some debauch,
The room that once was comely.

Yet how good,

After a night when all that you have done,
Since you were born, of folly or of wrong
Has haunted the interminable hours
Until you blushed in the dark, to issue forth
And be alive again, and know the past,
For good or bad, is dead : how good to come
To the enchanted hall where daffodils
Speak of the Spring, that lingers in the Isles,
Yet sends these messages she will return
Full soon to ease your longing !

Violets

Bring fragrance of the South and quiet faith
That knows the world is goodly, and will not change.

Hark how the sparrows underneath the roof
Twitter and cheep: they know that she is near.
And the rough voices—you, an idler here,
Must needs make way for toilers—even they
Are glad and jovial.

O, the Spring will come,
And once again the wind be in the West;
Breathing the odour of the sea; and life,
Life that was ugly, and work that grew a curse,
Be God's best gifts again, and in your heart
You'll find once more the dreams you thought
were dead
When last the London plane-trees shed their bark.

X.

THE heart my love had broken

I took from her again,

Nor left with her a token

Of hope that turned to pain.

But when I sought to wander

Where I was fain to go,

Upon my love to ponder

That did maltreat me so,

The vows that I had spoken

While yet she played with me,

Remained, a bond unbroken,

And still I am not free.

XI.

LIKE twilight's footsteps in the grass

Rustling the rain did fall.

From far away beyond the fields

Clear came the cuckoo's call.

And while we lingered where the may

Dipped to the waters clear,

Life seemed a song to fit the tune

Sung by the babbling weir.

XII.

WHERE bloomed the heather flames the gorse in
gold,

And rich in red and gold the bramble climbs
The berried hedge, where tokens manifold
Speak *Death, Death, Death*, more plain than
graveyard rhymes.

Yet will I hope: though all the world doth wear
The livery of Autumn, there's a maid
Whose cloak's of scarlet, golden-bright her hair,
And, in an hour, she cometh, unafraid

And beautiful as Spring returned again
From dismal Hades. Autumn decked the throne,
But in an hour my Sylvia comes to reign
Where gold and scarlet prove the world her own.

XIII.

BROWN girl, wild girl, here's a good-bye !

Never shall I meet you in the coming days—

Brave days to come when your flying locks they
tie,

Lengthen your kirtle, bid you change your ways.

Laugh by the sea where you walk with rosy feet,

Turn not to watch as I mount the lonely hill. . .

Through all the years that will never let us meet,

Brown girl, dear girl, I shall love you still.

XIV.

I WILL not move my hand to where

I dream you sit with silken hair

That waits for my caress. Mine eyes
Are hungry for the sight of you ;
Yet are they closed, for still 'tis true,
Only the man who dreams is wise.

Of wisdom I have scanty store,

Nor may I swear to err no more,

But O, my heart, I still shall hold
To this my dream that comforts me :
Where'er you wander you will be
Here, where you came to me of old.

XV.

I WATCH you from across the room
And still my wonder is
If, as you give me glance for glance,
You'd give me kiss for kiss.

Till now we've played an idle game,
To while the time away:
Sweet, if I chose to stake my all,
Would you refuse to play?

XVI.

ART IN LIFE

I KNEW a man men pitied, for he lived
In a mean house, alone. A woman, old,
Ugly, and deaf, looked to his daily needs,
Still grumbling at her work. If e'er he came
Into the outer world, he seemed to stand
Without a lighted window, and look in
On joys he might not share.

And so he died,
And the mean house was entered, and men knew
His days had been fulfilled with happiness.

Dreams had been with him, lovelier than life,
And, in the pictures piled against the wall,

He left them to the world. Here was a hint
Of beauty half perceived—or haply seen
In some enraptured moment perfectly,
And never quite recalled; and here you saw
The lovely vision as himself had seen.

Fog hid the sky, but here, in the dark house,
For him the dawns were radiant, and the night
Fell always as to music, with the sea
Never unheard. He walked the ugly streets,
And saw but Venus rising from the waves
Rose-flushed, and heard sweet voices far away
Singing her praises.

So he lived and died,
Not dispossessed, but serving constantly
His generous mistress; and men pitied him,
And women wondered if, when he was young—
So long ago—he had known love and life.

XVII.

ART AND LIFE

WHEN the earth darkens, and the voices call—
Old friends', old loves'—what thing that you have
done

Will you remember gladly? Will it be
The knowledge hardly won, and at the end
The masterpiece men bow to?

O, to paint
Some picture that shall live throughout the years,
And ever be a shining mystery
To them that follow! O, from common stone
To carve some miracle of loveliness
That shall not perish! O, to write a book

With all the best that you have seen and heard
And suffered, set forth there upon the page,
So that, through all the ages, one at least
Shall read and make you immortal!

So you pray,

Till Art seems Life; but when the voices call
And the earth darkens, and the stars are veiled,
You will forget the prayer, forget the deed.

You will remember how you gave a flower
Once, to a child that wept, and how the face
Of the tired mother blessed you as the child
Laughed and was quieted. On a time, a word,
And a hand's touch that lingered, gave to one
Tempted and tried the courage that was lost.
Once, long ago, there was a little maid,
And, though the years have hid her, you will know
Her perfect faith the best of all your gain.

Thus, when earth darkens and the voices call,
Art will grow less, and small forgotten things
Will steal, like stars into the evening sky,
Into your heart, and you will hear the call
And, at the last, make answer, well content.

XVIII.

THE stars are shining so clearly, clearly,
They seem not far from the city street,
But you—Sweetheart, whom I love so dearly—
I half forget if we e'er did meet.

I half forget if 'twas I that kissed you
Once, where the willows kiss the stream.
I only know I have missed you—missed you,
Out of my life, or out of a dream.

XIX.

THERE'S never a wave upon Western beaches
Falls and fades to a wreath of foam,
But takes at the last a voice that reaches
Over the distance and calls me home.

And you, who love me, if you would know me
Come away to the Western sea,
The land that did make shall take and show me
Better than that I have seemed to be.

XX.

THE wind came whispering in the night ;

Then, soft against my window pane,

Followed the murmur of the rain,

And O, my love, my heart was light !

For, sure, a promise stood confest :

That soon yourself would come again,

Who sent cool winds and welcome rain

From out your Kingdom of the West.

So I kept vigil all the night

While still the rain fell whisperingly . . .

I dared to dream you dreamt of me,

And O, my love, my heart was light.

XXI.

THE WORLD'S END

MANY a time I have come to the World's End.

A glare of gas broke from the public-house,
A butcher shouted raucous, for it was late
And they were few who stayed to finger and weigh
And haggle. The last omnibus went by,
And folk who had waited looked, and, in despair,
Walked on through the rain. This was at the
World's End.

Another time I came to the World's End.

The day died haggard, killed by the East wind
That brought it in. The air was deadly with smoke,

And life grew hateful to tortured man and beast.
Beyond a rotten fence, flagrant with bills,
The field that none would buy was rank with weeds,
Rough with dishonoured graves. . . . 'Twas thus

I came

A second time to the place they call World's End.

The summer dusk fell softly and the birds—
Grey-bird and black—still sang, and I went forth
Into the magical twilight. Tall and white
Glimmered the flowers in the ditches, and the scent
Of hawthorn held the air, and of those who passed
Each gave me greeting, as to an old friend.

The birds grew silent and the stars came out
Filling the sky, and so I dreamed my way
To the last lamp, and the long, lingering lane
That leads me, under whispering trees, to where

I, who have known sadness, come as bringer of joy,
And share the burden : this at the World's End.

Yet once again I shall come to the World's End.

O, may I reach it on some day in Spring,
Tracking the stream I haunted long ago
Through fields of daffodil ; for in the West
Where sunset speaks of dawn, and winter is kind,
And sleep comes as to children, it were good,
A little tired, to wander home at last :
To reach the end of the maze, and smell the earth,
Fragrant with dew, and marvel, and hear a voice :
“ Home? It was Home, and now is the World's
End.”

XXII.

HAD I stripped field and garden for your sake,
And from the skies whereunder I must walk
Given you the stars to wear for ornament,
And so gone darkly—had you never known
Till someone told you, “These were the flowers of
his life,—

These jewels that you scorn were all his light,”
And you remembered for a little space
(All this long after) think not, Heart o’ mine,
That you could be my debtor.

Stars are bright—
The very eyes of Angels—because you came.
And if the rose is radiant, if the Spring

Gladdens with violet and daffodil,
'Tis that you gave life's ultimate gift of love,
And love taught faith. So all you had of me
I gave you freely as the sun gives light,
And as the wind comes whispering in the night
Softly, to bid you sleep again. . . . A gift
Can never make a debtor.

Heart o' mine,

This is your truth, but hear what's truth for me:—
Once on a time (you knew not that I heard,
But I was told it) someone spoke my name
Unkindly, told of wasted days, of nights
Given up to folly, and you heard awhile
Until he looked for laughter and your eyes
Compelled his silence. On a time your hand
Rested in mine beyond the moment's need;
And once your lips. . . . O, had I kissed them then
Should I have won my Hope? I may not know

But, for these gifts that once you brought to me,
The stars' soft shining and the secret song
Heard in my heart, I have a debt to you
That all the years will never let me pay.

XXIII.

LAST night, last night, how far away,
How far away her eyes,
That gave me neither yea nor nay,
Yet made me sweet replies.

Tomorrow I shall win again
To where my lady is,
And whisper, haply not in vain,
Heart's dreams and fantasies.

Haply tomorrow she will hark,
But still day lingers here,
And long must be the night, and dark,
Or e'er I reach my dear.

XXIV.

Now that my love lies sleeping
How call me glad or sad,
Who gave into her keeping
Everything I had:

All love I held for beauty
And all I knew of truth,
All care for any duty,
And what I kept of youth?

Now that my love lies sleeping
There's neither good nor bad. . . .
I gave into her keeping
Everything I had.

XXV.

If only a woman were kind again,
Or could but a man forget,
'Twere little enough we had left to gain,
Purged of our last regret.

Could only a man forget, forget,
Or a woman once forgive,
The gods we have cursed might allow us yet
A life it were good to live.

XXVI.

I WONDER what would please you best

If I should bid you choose it ?

I'd have it wake my memory

Whene'er you chance to use it.

I'd send you all your promises

But they, you know, are broken ;

Your kisses, too, I gave you back—

A token for a token.

So, if you scorn me, let my scorn

For blessing with you tarry ;

If pity, take my pity, dear—

A gift to him you marry.

XXVII.

WIND, with your whispering, leave me ;

The lying tale you tell

Will never more deceive me,

Who know her heart so well.

The faery tale you weave me

May vex, but not undo ;

Wind, with your whispering, leave me. . . .

And yet—if it were true !

XXVIII.

THE moon rose slowly over the land,
The white foam drew to the shore.
We two went wandering, hand in hand,
Where none can have walked before.

No moon so fair was seen o'er the land
By other eyes, or before ;
No tide so softly drew to the strand
Or sang to so lone a shore.

The moon sank slowly under the sea :
Grey, O grey, was the morn. . . .
Ah ! sad eyes, how ye looked on me—
Desolate, most forlorn !

XXIX.

So we have come to the parting of the ways,
And you, dear heart—O, kindest heart on earth,
And truest, and most beautiful—forget
All that you knew when first you came to me,
Utterly trustful.

I, who am alone,
Still keep my gladness : years on years have passed,
And every day a song was in my heart,
And faith bred faith ; and shall I lose it now,
The best of all you gave me ?

Heart o' mine,
You will come back ; and though I may not see
The dear brown eyes, nor ever hear again
The voice that haunts me, surely I shall know,
As now I know. . . . You will come back to me.

XXX.

THE HUNDRED WINDOWS

STILL the day lingers, but the night
Waits only to be summoned : light
The candles, let my Japanese
Dear Geisha-girls step forth to please.

One window shows the ashen day,
Gaunt chimneys in their disarray ;
But draw the curtain close, and scan
My windows opening on Japan.

A hundred frames upon the wall
Reveal the mousmé's life, and all
The little joys that come and go
'Twixt cherry-bloom and fall of snow.

One sits and looks across the sea,
And haply wonders what may be
Beyond the West, but will forget,
Her mirror killing all regret.

And one, supremest of them all,
Stares from her window in my wall. . . .
Dear, I could love you, even so
As men loved vainly long ago.

Yet, here in robes of rich brocade,
Your shameful beauty you parade,
Who keep within your heart for flowers
The simple love of happier hours.

The cherry-blossom falls as snow,
A score of maidens sit below,
And while one strums the samisen
Some talk there is of foolish men.

And, look : like him of old Japan,
I turn in vain from Fuji-San !
Across the rice fields, or the stream,
The snowy summits gleam and dream.

White sails are scattered on the blue,
And in the nights of wondrous hue
A million stars to sudden fire
Break, and the gentle folk admire.

Here, on a river wrapped in night,
The fairy craft with many a light
And many a lilt of laughter, go
Beneath the bridge that spans its flow.

It is the bridge I cross at night
To gain the land of my delight ;
And many a dawn has seen me stand
Where yon fair maids go hand in hand :

Has seen me, fearful of the day,
The chimneys in their disarray,
Turn back, as now I turn, to scan
The laughing life of old Japan.

XXXI.

EVERY kiss I had of you
Cost me many sorrows.
Each day I was glad of you
Brought me bitter morrows.

Now I say farewell to you,
Yet, by Heaven above me,
I would win through Hell to you
Did you come to love me.

XXXII.

THE sullen dawn in the East comes creeping,

Grey and heavy with woes of the day.

The love I must lose lies softly sleeping

With never a dream that can bring dismay.

And it's well that my love lies softly sleeping,

Lulled with dreams at the break of the day

That shall hear ere it end the sound of her weeping

For love that is over—joy that's away.

XXXIII.

AT MEETING

If weeping follow laughter,
Clear sunlight follows rain,
And hours like this come after
The times when we are twain.

So hark not to the beating
Swift wings of Time, who fain
Within the hour of meeting
Would make us part again.

But give of your caresses
The first as 'twere the last. . . .
Perchance the hour fate blesses
Is even now o'erpast.

XXXIV.

ROSA ROSARUM

Now will the roses bloom in vain,

Vainly their perfumes shed.

She will not wear the rose again,

My rose of roses, dead.

XXXV.

By day I would forget you, if I might,
And that dear country where we walked of old,
So glad together.

Haply I have sinned,
Yet I had never a dream but was of you,
Nor any hope save one I dared not breathe.
And my eyes told it, and I think my voice,
When I spoke lightly of trivial happenings,
Changed unawares and showed you all my heart.
You knew I loved you, yet we dwell apart
And shall not meet.

The years are slow to pass,
And we are young, and have so long to live,

It seems we are not mortal. . . . Little heart,
I shall not hear your laughter any more,
Nor watch your eyes, so like the sea we loved,
Where sunlight chased the shadow ; yet the night—
Beautiful Night the Angel of us all—
Gives me the antient dream.

You come to me

And we forget the years, and once again
We wander where the earliest primrose comes,
In that most magical valley that we knew
So long ago, as in a fairy-tale.
Doves croon upon the nest, the blackbirds shriek.
'Tis mating time—what need of any word?
You know I love you, and full well you know
It is for ever.

So the lovely night

Gives me for guerdon of the barren day
Clear dawns, with grey-birds singing, and the scent

Of roses newly blown, and dusky hours
When the world's heart beats quietly, and from
the sky

The starlight falls like rain on drouthy fields
In the hot summer. And you are with me,
And we are most content, and well we know
It is for ever.

Heart of mine, I sinned,
And yet I love you, yet make prayer to you,
Regaining for an hour the lovely dream
Night gives me always.

Come again to me !
O, as the wind comes whispering from the West,
And makes life good again, and gives you back
All that was lost, come you again to me,
Making the desolate years a summer day,
With Death for twilight and the call to sleep.

XXXVI.

THE RETURN

I HAVE come back. . . . O, shall I swear again
Never to leave you, Mother, be the call
Of the imperious city ne'er so loud
Here where the quiet blesses?

Mother mine,

I read the answer in those eyes serene,
So sad, so loving. I have come to you
Tired of all things men deem desirable,
And I would only watch the twilight fall
Over the sea, and wander as of old
Through the soft night, alone and unafraid.
I have come back to dwell with you awhile,

But soon,—O, soon!—the call will come again,
And I must go. And I shall learn of men,
Who should have learned of God and learned of
you,
Gaining a gradual wisdom.

Long ago
I was the heir of all that's good in life,
And the flowers knew me, and the antient sea
Whispered to me in many a magic night
Secrets untold. O, Mother, I come back
And none will know me here, but you will know,
And I shall walk barefoot o'er twilit sands
Alone and unafraid.

Is it the sea
Calling so softly through the night? The stars
Look down contemptuous, and I am afraid.
Have you forgotten? Is there none who knows

That once this realm of quiet was my own?
'Tis London calls me. Never any more
May I regain the kingdom I have lost.
I will return, a prisoner of the streets,
To where the night is clamorous as the day,
And sleep half lifts the curtains that have hid
The hell awaiting sons that you forget.

XXXVII.

THE SPRING CALLS

LET us go forth, my heart, to watch the Spring
Wherever most you love it : let us learn
The lesson April teaches every year
And every Winter makes forget . . . O, come
To that so distant valley where the stream
Sings always, and the wind-flower blows to-day,
And men go quietly from birth to death,
Even as the happy days from dawn to dusk.
There is so much we have forgot ; so much
Hurting us now, 'twere easy to forget
Hearing the stream sing softly.

Or shall we go,
While London sleeps, to where we once were glad—

Where water whispers, rippling o'er the weir,
And warblers in the willows, for sheer joy,
Sing all the day? Surely by Bablockhithe
The king-cups wait and would not die unplucked.
And there's a wood of beeches, set on high,
Where silence dwells ; and, underneath, the downs
Stretch to the sea. . . . O, Heart o' mine, the sea :
Have you not heard it calling? For the Spring
Wakes us again to know we are not old,
Nor blind, nor deaf, as we have been—to know
The rapture of the morning, and what peace
Falls from the shining stars.

Let us go forth
That we may learn again the truths forgot
In Winter days: how wondrous good is life—
Life that holds love—and children we will be,
And find the Spring's dear ways all new again.

XXXVIII.

CORNISH CAROL

It came upon the frosty night,
The sound of voices singing clear,
The moon was down, the stars were bright;
The shepherds left their flocks to hear—
Noel, Noel,
Christ is born in Israel.

A little child, I woke and heard
The sound of voices far away.
My heart sang—following word by word,
Until I slept at break of day—
Noel, Noel,
Christ is born in Israel.

Grown old, I seek my home again,

And still the voices sing to me.

My heart, forgetful of its pain,

Is glad as it was used to be.

Noel, Noel,

Christ is born in Israel.

O, ye that suffer, and are sad,

Bethink you of His love, and so

Hark to the voices and be glad.

There is no sorrow, since ye know—

Noel, Noel,

Christ is born in Israel.

XXXIX.

ONCE, when my home was by the sea,
In the old days that were so blest,
Whene'er the wind was in the West
Then would my father say to me :
"If you could travel without rest
At swallow's pace, unceasingly,
You'd come not for a week or more
Where this cool wind last touched the shore."

But now the sea is leagues away,
And when I know by heart's unrest
The wind is blowing from the West—
Ah, then, all bitterly, I say :
"O happy wind, thou hast caressed
To-day, or maybe yesterday,
A maiden yet more far from me
Than the last star the eye can see."

XL.

'Tis good to watch the yellow lights
Come out across the bay ;
And well the music of your voice
Closes a perfect day.

Only . . . the sunset seemed a rose
O'erblown, whose leaves are falling ;
And while I listen to your voice
I hear the old sea calling.

XLI.

WHEN I was but a little lad
My master set me rhyming,
And often bade me stand and hark
When Blagden bells were chiming.

And so I grew, and many a day
Loved well this game of rhyming,
For all the fated words rang sweet
As Blagden bells a-chiming.

But times are changed, and if I say,
As all must say, "To-morrow,"
All out of tune the bells reply,
"To-morrow—morrow—sorrow."

XLII.

I LOOK over the moorland,
I look out to sea,
And into the shining heavens—
Empty are all three.

Only, across the moorland,
Out of the lonely sea,
The voice of a child for ever
Calls and calls on me.

I look over the moorland,
I look out to sea:
And God's great world is empty,
Child, for lack of thee.

XLIII.

WHEN the sea calls, that lieth leagues away,
Athwart the lighted city and the din,
This little room is Hell till dawn of day,
And I a sinner damned for sordid sin.

Better the long day and the dripping rain,
The hateful cries of hawkers in the street,
Small hateful tasks to do and do again—
These let me dream my dream that rest is sweet.

XLIV.

THE old sea here at my door,
The old hills there in the West—
What can a man want more
Till he goes at last to his rest?

I have wandered over the earth,
I have lived in the years gone by.
Now here, in the place of my birth,
I wait till 'tis time to die:

To sleep and to take my rest,
The old sea here at my door,
The grey hills there in the West . . .
What can a man want more?

XLV.

Now what avail the barren hopes of Spring,
The lying promise of the early year,
Since never any day to come shall bring
The sole fulfilment that I crave more near ?

The garden of dear hopes that I have kept
Lies hedgeless, that the world may walk therein.
Strangers have trampled it and winds have swept :
It ends a desert as it did begin.

So what avail the hopes that come with Spring,
And what the steadfast faith that I have kept ?
Ah, sweetheart, these are grown so slight a thing,
I was most near to laughter when you wept.

XLVI.

SING hey for the wind in the barley green,
And the great clouds drifting over;
For the dear brown sails, far out, that lean
To the kiss of the sea, their lover.

Sing hey for the fields of barley green,
With the mad wind rushing over,
And hey for the path that runs between
Where my dearest waits for her lover.

XLVII.

DEATH AND A TOWN

CHANGES have fallen, yet the little town—
Ugly, and grey, and huddled under the hill—
Keeps the same face, and when you come in the
dawn

Rain falls. It is not winter, but the air
Chills to the bone, and O, the drawn white blinds
Make you a stranger—here, at home again
After so long.

The time of waking comes.
Carts rattle by, and men that you have known
Year after year, whose aspect is unchanged,
Go to their work, that must have been the same
Year after year, since first the little town
Came and was ugly.

But you wander forth
And walk the accustomed streets, and are afraid.
Surely the world is dead, and these are ghosts,
Ev'n as the others are that meet you here,
But greet you not?

*O Mother, Mother mine,
Have you forgotten, that you pass me by,
Bent on some errand of sweet charity,
And do not heed me?*

In the coming days
Life shall be given again, and there shall be
Warm homes, and happy laughter, and the sound
Of fireside hymns. But Death is here to-day:
The living are estranged, the throng of the dead
Walk in the streets under the low grey sky,
And you, a ghost, go with them and are afraid.

XLVIII.

PEACE

FOR two long years, serene and beautiful,
With luminous eyes that still must speak the truth,
Whate'er her will, the girl went to and fro
As if she held her heart, as if the world
Ended where ends the village. Noon and night
She talked of all that happened yesterday,
And what might come to-morrow—little things,
But still the life of the village; and we knew
Her heart was worn—a golden amulet—
By her sworn knight, the boy that we had loved
But once took lightly.

Underneath the elms,
As the calm twilight settled into night

And country folk came into the good air
Out of the ancient church, I told the news,
Being most glad to bring her back her heart—
The heart denied me ; and I did not guess
What tears must come when fear took wing at last
And the long day was ended, and the night,
Shining with stars, gave largesse of good sleep
And happy trust.

So I brought peace to her,
But the dear eyes were clouded, and the voice
Broke, and I left here underneath the elms,
Lest I should hear her, sobbing in the dusk.

XLIX.

EPILOGUE

(To H. S. R.)

SONGS are sung, and the people hear,
And the Lord knows what they think of it all.
But the name of the lady you hold most dear
You would not breathe though the skies should
fall.

It's sad—O, sad ! to have broken your heart,
To pine and wish you were spent and old.
But, bless you, lad, though you've told a part,
There's still some secret you have not told.

L.

TWO GARDENS

I

HER garden is not fair, you say,
Where never a flower may be,
Soon as the gardener takes away
Hammock from apple-tree?

When dahlias fail and fade away,
When frosts begin to be,
Her garden is not fair you say,
With never a flower to see?

My Queen is queen of half the earth :
Wherever you may go,
In wondrous gardens flowers have birth
Because she loves them so.

In winter time the sunlight smiles
On fields of daffodil,
Down yonder in the western isles,
To give her flowers at will.

She loves the faithful violets:
And do you think the sun
Ever at any time forgets
Her bidding must be done?

Violets travel through the day,
They travel all the night;
Then, while the morning still is grey,
She smiles and gives them light.

And roses, too: she loves them well,
And well the flowers remember;
More roses than a man could tell
Come to her in November.

Her garden is not fair, you say,
With never a flower to see ;
Go to her, ask her, if you may,
What winter flowers can be.

TWO GARDENS

II

SHE walks by shadowed garden ways ;

The lily and the rose

Fulfil for her the golden days :

She knows each bud that blows.

The lime-leaves quiver overhead

Whene'er she passes there :

In summer sport they sift and shed

The sunlight on her hair.

The grey-bird sits upon the nest,

Watching with shining eye,

Thinking what song will be the best

To make her lullaby.

The wind has pleasant things to tell,
The babble of the stream
Comes softly from a woodland dell,
Like music in a dream.

Nor sad nor angry may you be
Who have the leave to lie,
Cool, in the shadow of a tree,
Until the Queen comes by.

LI.

COON SONG

I LOVE you, my honey, and you can't stop that,
Though you wonder and you wonder what I'm at
(what I'm at).

Though you've told me very often
That your heart will never soften,
I love you, my honey, and you can't stop that.

I love you, my honey, and you can't stop that,
Though you wonder and you wonder what I'm
at (what I'm at),

For the time is surely near
When you'll love me back, my dear ;
For I love you, oh, I love you, and you can't
stop that.

I love you, my honey, for I can't help that ;
I love the ground you've trod on and the chair in
 which you've sat ;
Though you've told me—oh, so often—
That your heart will never soften,
I've got to love you, honey, and I can't help that.

I love you, &c.

And I'm not the fool men think me—though you've
 called me that,
And you wonder and you wonder what I'm at
 (what I'm at),
For though you've told me often
That your heart will never soften,
I love you very dearly, and I trust to that.

LII.

MOTHER SLEEP

WHEN Mother Sleep comes walkin' round (walkin'
round, walkin' round).

Her feet move quick, but they make no sound—

When Mother Sleep comes round.

You did not guess you were tired at all,

But when she comes, as the shadows fall,

She takes you, makes you glad at last

To sleep till the long, long night is past.

When Mother Sleep comes softly round (softly
round, softly round).

You never know, for you hear no sound—

When Mother Sleep comes round.

She takes you, makes you glad to sleep,
Glad to give her your heart to keep.
So you sleep, and you sleep (*go to sleep!*) and at last
You wake, and the long long night is past.

LIII.

WHEN God grows tired of wintry days

He looks upon the earth,

Dreaming, till in a hundred ways

His dreams have mortal birth.

His eyes upon the barren clay

Fall, and His thought, the rose,

Out of the darkness day by day

From bud to blossom grows :

From bud to regal blossom blows

With fragrance wandering wide:

And O, 'tis little thinks the rose

Of roses that have died.

Till, on a wondrous night of June,
Its petals one by one
Fall softly underneath the moon
And life's brief tale is done.

There is no sorrow at the end :
Still dreams the rose in death
Of dews the midnight hour shall send,
Of morning's fragrant breath.

And when God tires of wintry days
He looks upon the earth,
Dreaming, till in a hundred ways
His dreams have mortal birth :

Till that first creature of His thought,
The rose, that now is clay,
From bud to regal blossom brought,
Makes fair another May.

LIV.

PIED PIPER'S SONG

THERE'S a land not far away,
In the heart of yonder hill,
Where all day the children play,
And there's never a soul to say
That the child at play does ill.
Come away ! Come away !
Learn to play.

There's a land not far away
Where 'tis never time for bed :
Where the grown-up folk obey
What the smallest children say—
Or go straight to bed instead.
Come away ! Come away !
Come and play !

LV.

SONG OF THE BURGHERS' WIVES

Now the sparrows' twitter dies
 'Neath the thatch, and only
One sad nightingale that sings
 Makes the night more lonely.
Though the hour of prayer be come
 No small knee is bended. . . .
Raven locks and Hair-o'-gold
 Whither are ye wended?

Raven locks and Hair-o'-gold,
 How my arms are aching
Just to clasp you once again—
 How my heart is breaking!

Come, O come! Come back again

Now the night is falling.

Hair-o'-the-sun and Locks-of-night,

'Tis your Mother calling.

LVI.

LADY Mary in your bower

Why weep ye sadly ?

Tall and white your lilies flower,

All birds sing gladly.

Mary, Lady Mary,

What sorrow bear ye ?

'Tis the child that shall be born

(Foolish thou, who questioneth),

'Tis the crown of cruel thorn,

And the sure-appointed death.

Mary, Mother, left alone,

Why go ye gladly ?

Wherefore make ye not your moan,
Weeping most sadly?
Mary, Mother Mary,
What comfort bear ye?

*'Tis the Child: that he hath won
Victory over death and sin;
Hath the grave's stronghold undone,
Soon as he was laid therein.*

LVII.

FAR had he wandered ere he found
The lands where treasure doth abound ;
Great was the wisdom that he brought
From regions where it may be bought.

And then a child, for company,
Sat on a time upon his knee,
And told him how the violets grow,
And why your mother loves you so.

He flung his treasure to the wind ;
He wanders now in hope to find
The little wisdom of the child,
The faith secure and undefiled.

LVIII.

I LOVE my Mother more than words
Can tell, also my Father ;
I love my Uncle and his friends ;
But, still, I wonder rather

Why God compels us to be old
Before we're tired of playing ;
To sit in chairs, and talk, and still
Say nothing worth the saying.

But I suppose He made the world,
And put young children in it,
To pick his flowers, climb trees, and play ;
And then He saw, next minute,

There must be people tales to tell
To children, and to feed them,
To build them houses, and to find
Warm clothes, if they should need them.

So, children, come and play with me:
You soon will be grown older;
And every day is as a night
That hourly groweth colder.

And you, who once were children too,
Be careful what you're saying,
Lest ever you should chance to speak
A word to stop our playing.

LIX.

TELLING STORIES

A LITTLE child He took for sign
To them that sought the way Divine.

And once a flower sufficed to show
The whole of that we need to know.

Now here we lie, the child and I,
And watch the clouds go floating by,

Just telling stories turn by turn. . . .
Lord, which is teacher, which doth learn?

LX.

THE EARL OF DUFFERIN AND AVA

(IN MEMORIAM)

Most grave, most dignified, and serving well
God and the Realm, he reaches now the end,
And death comes like the evening of a day
Fulfilled with strenuous labour and the joy
In deeds accomplished.

Enemies are friends
 Because he loved our England and could use
 The statesman's and the scholar's art to turn
 Sudden resentment—haply not unjust,
 But futile still—into the happier mood
 Wherein men meet and differences end.

Well loved, and loving well, full of wise care
For all who had the joy to call him friend,
For all that he had ruled, he passes now,
And men lament him over the wide earth.
But rest was earned by labour, and the night
Falls softly, and the sky is filled with stars.
And that strong tower he built to speak of love
Shall be blown dust or ever we forget.

LXI.

G. W. STEEVENS

(IN MEMORIAM)

THE pages of the Book quickly he turned.
He saw the languid Isis in a dream
Flow through the flowery meadows, where the
ghosts
Of them whose names are glory of Greece and
Rome
Walked with him. Then the dream must have an
end,
For London called, and he must go to her,
To learn her secrets—why men love her so,
Loathing her also. Yet again he learned
How God, who cursed us with the need of toil,

Relenting, made the very curse a boon.

Then came a call to wander through the world

And watch the ways of men. He saw them die

Wounded and sick, and struggling still to live,

To fight again for England, and again

Greet those who loved them. Well indeed he
knew

How good it is to live, how good to love,

How good to watch the wondrous ways of men—

How good to die if ever there be need.

And everywhere our England in his sight

Poured out her blood and gold, to share with all

Her heritage of freedom won of old.

Thus quickly did he turn the pages o'er

And learn the goodness of the gift of life;

And when the Book was ended, glad at heart—

The lesson learned, and every labour done—

Find at the end life's ultimate gift of rest.

LXII.

QUEEN VICTORIA

LIFE is grown empty, for, but yesterday,
'Twas all-in-all to have the right to say :
There is a Lady whom I live to serve,
For whose least pleasure it were good to die.

Queen of all Queens, so many days come back,
The heart may scarce believe the tale it tells
With slow beats, like the sounding of a knell.
How should Death touch you? Over the wide
world

Millions had welcomed all there is of pain
To screen you if the sun but shone too bright

Or if the wind blew coldly. . . . Death is
 come,
And their great love is turned to vanity.

Mother and Queen, was ever love in vain?
While hearts remember, is there any death?
Time shall not touch the glory men have won
To give the Crown more splendour—yours, who
 held

So gently, with a grace so equable,
Reverence no Lady ever knew of old,
Power that no dreaming Monarch dared to ask,
Who wept for worlds to conquer.

 Woman's heart,
There is an end of sorrow, and the days
Shall bring no sad remembrance any more,
Nor any pitiful tale of wounded hearts
That you must succour—you who had the gift

To make the sorrowful half forget their woe
Because you shared their weeping. . . . Queen of
Queens,
All that life held was yours, and, at the last,
Death brings a tribute from his realm of sleep.

LXIII.

“W. V.”

APRIL 26, 1890—APRIL 15, 1901

HERE's a flower for you, lying dead,

Child, whom living I never met,

Friends a-many I may forget—

Not you, little Winifred.

Men grow sick when they live alone,

And long for the sound of a childish voice.

And you—how often you've made me rejoice

In a simple faith like your own.

So here's a flower for you, Winifred—

Out of London, a violet—

Little child whom I never met,

Winifred, lying dead.

LXIV.

L'ENVOI

O, THE years of old, they had feet of lead,
And a bitter grudge they bore us.
They were grey and cold; they are done and dead;
We have golden years before us.

And I bless the name of the Hope I had,
The faith in a shining morrow;
For the daylight came and the world's so glad
There's a wreath for the grave of Sorrow.

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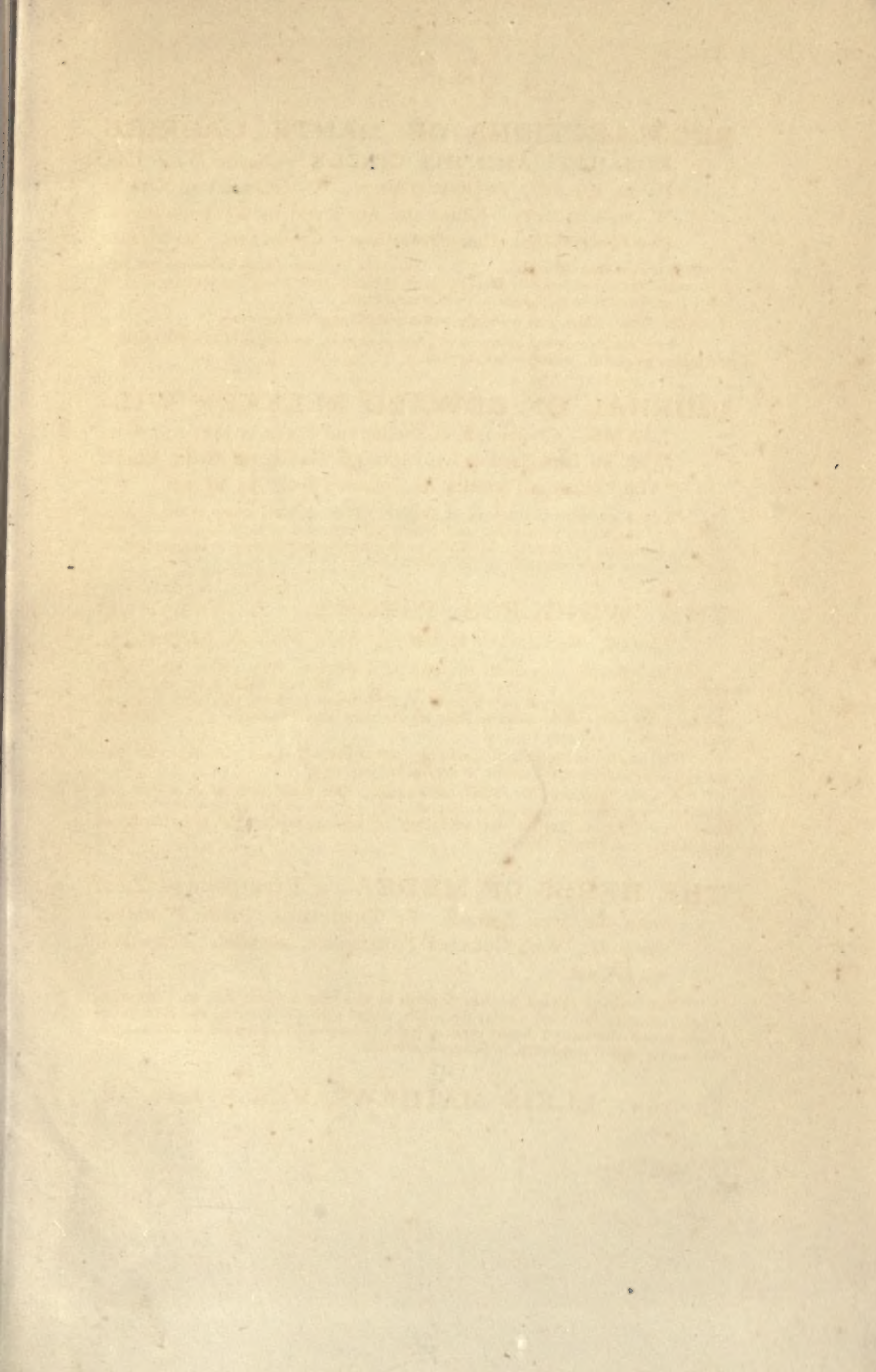
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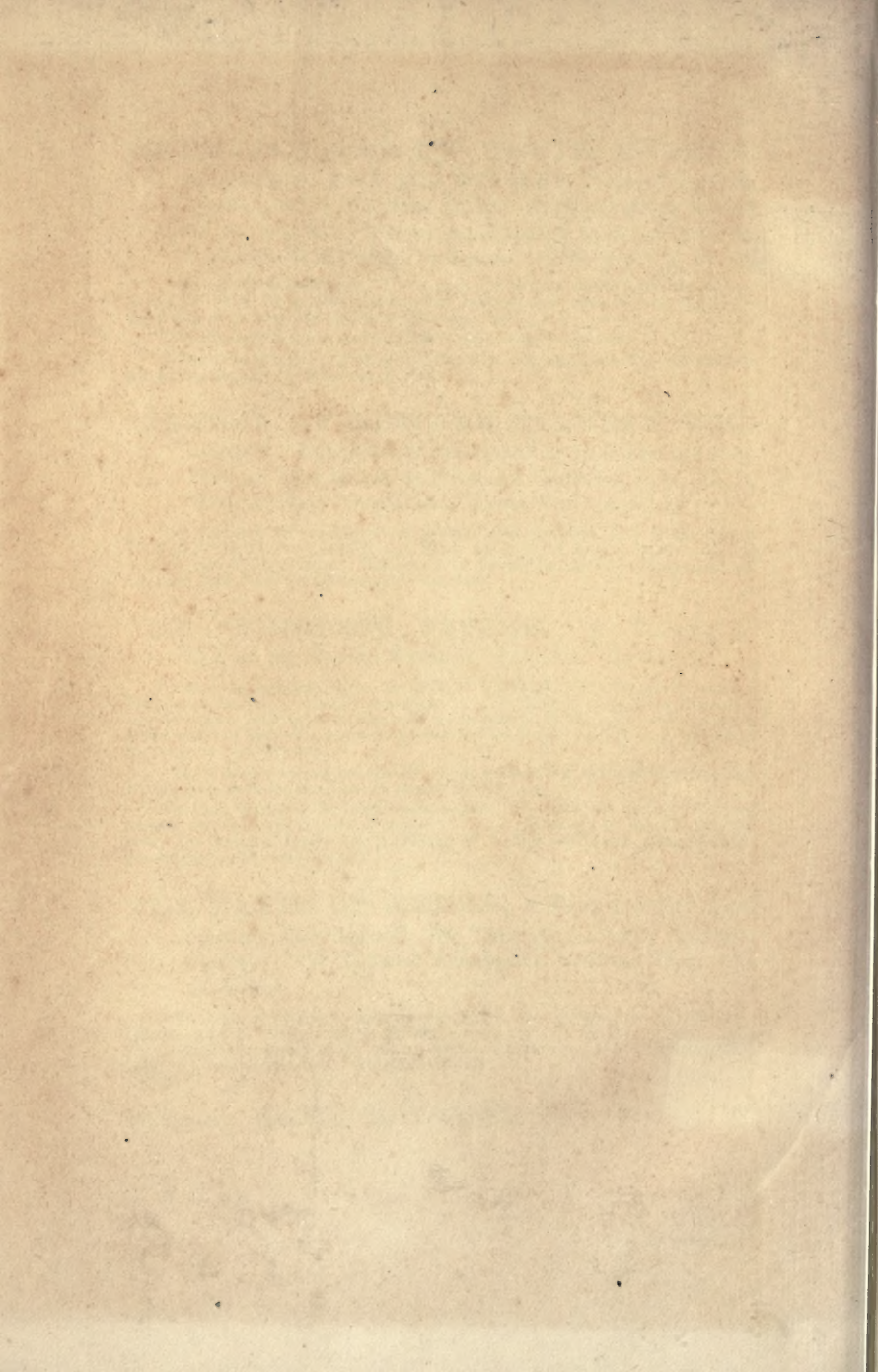
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